

HARC Advocacy Subcommittee Meeting
November 1, 2022, 10:00 am
La Madeleine, King Street

Present: Martha Raymond, Martha Harris, Gail Rothrock, Donna DeBlasio, Michael Hobbs

Public: no one in attendance

Recent project review:

1. Torpedo Factory Task Force

Martha Raymond reported that the Torpedo Factory (TF) task force met Wednesday evening (10/26) at the Charles Houston recreational center. The topic was “facilities and programs.” The meeting began with dissension among the group after the City Manager (by phone) asked for any and all ideas the task force might have for the Torpedo Factory - no parameters. The dissension had to do with the fact we know there ARE parameters and why not work within them. When one task force member said “dream big” the consultant leading the meeting had us continue. At one point someone brought up environmental concerns and the consultant replied that they always take these into account when considering the TF - environmental hazards, structural issues, and resiliency. Martha used this as an opportunity to ask them to always include the historic character of the building, too. This developed into a brief discussion of the historic significance of the TF (industrial and artistic). Many task force members are interested, some enthusiastically.

Three task force members did not receive our HARC letter with attachments, so Martha sent it to them after the meeting. Once everyone has the info, she plans to ask for support from the group for NR listing, hopefully at the next meeting (Dec. 7).

When the consultant’s summary of the meeting is available, she will share and also report at the HARC meeting.

2. Samuel Madden

Gail pointed out that the project in its most recent iteration is above Parker Gray height limits. However, residents of the existing affordable housing have endorsed the plan. There were questions about why the affordable units and market units will be in separate buildings, whether the parking is adequate, the small space allotted for the food hub, construction type, and open space. The project goes before the Planning Commission on February 23, 2023.

Martha Harris shared data from the Mayor’s recent Council Connection letter which announces an increase in commitment to affordable housing units from 200 to 325 units annually, in line with the projections of the Metro Area Council of Governments (COG). It would be useful to have a full listing of the affordable units in projects that have been approved in the past couple of years and those in the pipeline for the next years.

Next meeting: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 at 10 AM at La Madeleine